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The Icelandic Canadian



ELEVENTH and TWELFTH VOLUMES

1952 — 1954



A Quarterly Magazine
Published By The Icelandic Canadian Club
Winnipeg, Manitoba

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The Icelandic Canadian

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No. 1

NEW PRESIDENT OF ICELAND



President Ásgeir Ásgeirsson

Ásgeir Ásgeirsson, former Prime Minister of Iceland, and member of the *Alþýðuflokkur* (Social Democrat Party) was elected president of Iceland at the general election, June 29.

The President has been effectively active in public service of the Icelandic

nation for many years. He was president of the two chambers of Parliament 1930-31, and was in charge of the extensive and elaborate preparation in 1930, for celebrating the Millennial anniversary of the establishment of the Icelandic Parliament, when he proved such a charming and gracious official host to the thousands of visitors.

In 1931 he became Minister of Finance and was Prime Minister 1933-34. In addition he has served on innumerable standing committees of the Government and Parliament. Since 1938 he has been manager of the "Útvegsbanki" of Iceland.

Ásgeir Ásgeirsson was born May 13th 1894. His parents were Ásgeir Eypórsson and Jensína Björg Matthíasdóttir.

His wife is Dóra, daughter of the late Bishop Þórhallur Bjarnason.

The President and the charming First Lady are well endowed physically and mentally to grace the position which has been bestowed upon them by the Icelandic nation.

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A COMMON PERSPECTIVE

I.

Last year an official Publishing Department in Iceland published a booklet of eighty pages entitled: — "Facts About Iceland". It is in English and was published to serve "an educative purpose". In 1946 The National Bank of Iceland published the fourth edition of its handbook (295 pages) on Iceland, "describing the economic and intellectual life of the nation".

Such books are undoubtedly published for English speaking people generally, but at present emphasis is being placed upon the need of reaching through such media people of Icelandic descent, who because of their lack of knowledge of Icelandic, can be reached only through the English language.

Books published in Iceland in the English language for educative purposes abroad; efforts made to picture the intellectual life of the people of Iceland to Canadian and American Icelanders through an English medium! It sounds interesting.

Should Vestur-Íslendingar, to many of whom English is the mother tongue, reciprocate and make it their aim to reach the people of Iceland, especially the younger generation? Should they also, as a fragment of the Icelandic nation, direct themselves more specifically than in the past, to the position in which they find themselves in the English speaking world of which they are a part?

It all opens up vistas of thought.

II.

To the people of Iceland, we of the West are part of their tiny world and also a part of the outside English-speaking world, with which they them-

selves are now more closely associated than ever before. We feel that we are part of that tiny Icelandic world and we want to continue that relationship. We also belong to the English-speaking world and do not want to shirk our responsibilities in it.

These are realities of fact and of feeling, both in Iceland and here. They provide a basis for a common perspective for the two groups of Icelandic people both in relation to each other and to the English-speaking world.

III.

All who believe in the preservation of some phase of Icelandic culture in America realize that there must be a constant intellectual traffic between Iceland and the West.

The ways in which this can be accomplished are of course many. There is travel across the ocean, exchange of letters, addresses by prominent visitors on both sides, daily and weekly newspapers and current periodicals. Finally, and most important of all, there is the literature, and the language in which it finds expression, extending from the Icelandic classics to sketchy and illustrative pamphlets. — All the literature is not on one side of the ocean.

For economic reasons travel is limited; letter-writing will inevitably decrease as memory fades; official and semi-official visits are excellent but they are bound to be intermittent; current newspapers and periodicals are of inestimable value, but because of the very fact that they are current, they lack the necessary background and by and large are but of the moment. Hence the last of the many ways

of spanning the ocean offers the greatest hope.

Here the reference to literature, both that of Iceland and ours, is not to the inherent value of that literature (the best literature of the world has no barriers of language, time or distance), but rather to its qualities in providing a perspective from which a clear view can be obtained across the ocean. The flow must be both westward and eastward. Only in that way is it possible for us to maintain even a limited knowledge of the people of Iceland and the ever changing scene over there. Only in that way is it possible for them to know us, as we are from time to time, in the vast process of nation building on this continent.

IV

But there is something more than the bond between us and our kith and kin of Iceland and the means that may be devised for maintaining it. In a somewhat peculiar way, which I hope I can make clear, the people of Iceland and we have a common destiny, or rather it may be said that in the destiny of each there is a common feature. In relation to that destiny or the common feature of two destinies, a duty arises which again is common.

This duty rests upon the simple yet inescapable fact that the Icelandic people in Iceland and here are something more than Icelanders and speak a language that is something more than their mother tongue. It is only of late that this duality, with its resulting duty, has emerged in its proper proportions and in its true significance. The duality differs, it is true, in the two cases. In the one the added factor is extraneous, in the other it is something superimposed within. But in both cases the duality impinges on a common heritage.

This duality arises in three ways.

The Icelandic nation, which only a few short years ago regained its original independence, is now much more than a small nation on an island touching the Arctic Circle. It is a member of the United Nations, and it is a member of the N. Atlantic Treaty Organization. This creates responsibilities outside the island and at the same time raises problems within. A nation of less than 140,000 people, whose island home is on one of the main aerial highways of the world, in close relationship with nations comprising many hundreds of millions of people! It sounds alarming. There is consolation in the security provided but there are misgivings which have given rise to serious thinking in Iceland. This is made clear in the address given by Gylfi Þ. Gíslason, delivered at Harvard University in July last, a part of which appears in this issue of the Icelandic Canadian.

The people of Icelandic descent in North America are something in addition to being Americans and Canadians. They feel that this something additional, inherited from the former Motherland, even if stripped of all sentiment, is of intrinsic value and should be preserved. Here the odds are even more overwhelming. A group of a few thousand loyal Canadians and Americans, measuring up to the responsibilities of their citizenship, attempting to retain something different in two nations rapidly approaching the two hundred million mark! That also gives rise to serious thinking.

Then there is the language. It, in the philological sense, is more than the mother tongue of the people of Iceland and the pioneers in this country and those of their descendants who still cling to it with commendable tenacity. So also the literature, to which

that language is the key, is, because of its quality, something more than the literature of a people less than two hundred thousand in number.

V

This duality of existence and of duty has a parallel. In fact it is, on a small scale, something very similar to what is taking place in the free world of today. That free world, as distinct from the whole world, again is something recent, born out of the crucible of what was really one world war with its aftermath foreboding even a greater cataclysm. It has produced a type of thinking and a perspective which are peculiarly applicable to our little Icelandic free world.

Words such as "national mind" and "international mind" have acquired a new meaning. Prior to the first war the difference of opinion centred upon the maintenance of sovereign states governing colonies or dependencies and the elimination of that relationship. In the lull between the two wars the theory of isolationism gained momentum in the United States and elsewhere. Now overseas empires have crumbled, isolationism has disappeared and in the new free world the conflict, if indeed there is one, is between the new nationalism, and the new, or perhaps one should say the purified internationalism.

But there really is no conflict. When a statesman in this new free world is said to be national or international in his thinking, that does not mean, on the one hand, that he is an imperialist, nor on the other that he is advocating that his country adopt a supine attitude in an international scheme of things. It simply means that these two men differ slightly as to what national adjustments need be made to guarantee the peace of the free world

and at the same time maintain the dignity and fundamental rights of member nations and individuals within those nations.

In that free world of tomorrow neither a North of Ireland nor a South Korea need have fears of being subjugated. Neither a Moslem in India nor an Arab in Israel need fear that he will be compelled to lose his identity or strip himself of what is most precious to him.

VI

It seems to me that the future of Iceland with its own language and its own culture and the future of us, as an ethnic group sharing and helping to guard that language and culture, rest upon the very type of foundation that is rapidly taking shape in the free world. Adjustments need to be made but only so far as is necessary to maintain the duality of existence and discharge the duality of duty in their proper proportions.

But a re-orientation of thinking in the free world does not mean that the people of Iceland and the people here of Icelandic descent, can sit back and rely upon the magnanimity and broad-mindedness of the nations who will mould the future of that free world. Surely the Icelandic people themselves, both those in Iceland and the fragment here, must in their record demonstrate that they merit the position they are so anxious to maintain. In fact the more vulnerable they become the more imperative it is that there be a proper diffusion of knowledge of that record. They must do more than maintain the high standard of the past in intellectual acumen and collective achievement. The thoughts and ideals of the Icelandic people, as expressed in their choice writings, must be made available not only for themselves and their descendants, but

for others as well. In that way enthusiasm and cooperation within will be engendered and maintained and recognition from the outside world will be duly accorded.

The needed enlightenment, because of the fact that the home nation and the offshoot here are so many thousand miles apart, but yet have a common obligation, is bound to be of a twofold character. There is a wide gap between the present younger generation in Iceland and the present younger generation here of descendants of the pioneers of three or four score years ago. Sentiment is disappearing and it must be replaced by knowledge of a common worth. Due to constant change this must be a continuous process of enlightenment. To bridge that gap is the first step and that brings me back to the place from which I started. There has to be a constant intellectual traffic between Iceland and the Icelandic districts on this continent.

The second step is complementary to the first. Both the home nation and the branch here should make available to the nations with which they are so closely associated, internationally in the one case and nationally in the other, a record of the noblest they share in heritage and the best they produce in present achievement.

The literature, if that is the proper term to use, perhaps the word material is better, must be of two kinds and two vehicles of expression must be used. Some of it should be purely factual and informative; some of it must be top rank literature, invigorating, encouraging and inspiring. In both cases it must be easily accessible, and not too voluminous. The vehicles of expression must be both Icelandic and English; not that every piece of poetry and every factual brochure need be

in both languages but rather that either language should be used as best serves the particular purpose.

It need hardly be pointed out that this material will be of equal value for home consumption. Our younger generation does not know the history of Vestur-Ísland. The younger generation of Iceland can hardly be expected to wade through the accumulation of centuries.

Much has of course already been done and a good deal of literature and factual material is available. It is unnecessary to give details either in regard to the work of individuals or of organizations. That work will and should continue and anything suggested here will be in addition to what may be available through existing channels.

VII

The criticism which, in my opinion, can be made here in the West, is not in regard to quality but rather in regard to methods and fields of effort. There is a lack of cooperation with the result that work is at best paralleled rather than coordinated and at times is even at cross purposes. There should be a common approach to problems, at least a comparing of notes if not a directed plan. Here also, as well as in the larger field, there is need of a common perspective.

The second criticism is that our efforts in America have not been directed, with due appreciation of actual facts, to our home field. What is building here in our midst, is so peculiarly a structure at once North American and Icelandic. The best in the record which mirrors that edifice, in concise form and in the appropriate medium of expression should be made available for the younger generation and for the outside world.

VIII

Here we can find guidance in Iceland. An official institution has been set up in Iceland called "Menntamálaráðið", The Culture Board, which has charge of a fund called "Menningar sjóður", The Culture Fund. Certain monies received by the government are paid into this fund.

The fund is used for several cultural purposes and the administration of it is divided into Departments, one of which is The Publishing Department. It is at present publishing a series of books called "Íslensk úrvallsrit", — Selected Icelandic Literature.

In 1940 this publishing establishment amalgamated with another one, "Þjóðvinafélagið", Society of the Peoples Friends, and the two distribute their publications jointly. A ten volume history of Iceland is being produced.

Then there is another organization, "Hið íslenska fornritafélag", The Icelandic Classics Society, which is bringing out a new edition of the Sagas with comprehensive introductions and annotations.

All of this shows how anxious leaders of thought in Iceland are to have the best in their literature and in their story made available in appropriate form for their youth and future generations.

IX

It seems to me that we can take a leaf from the book of our cousins. A lot has been written here, good, bad and indifferent. Much of it is already of record in book form, in magazines and in newspapers.

The question may well be asked: Has not the time come when we should publish our own Úrvallsrit? — This would comprise selections from our best authors: gems of poetry, short

stories, interpretive parts of our Saga, choice excerpts from novels. Some of it might even be original to fill gaps in the extant record of the Icelandic adventure on this continent. The selections would have to be from both Icelandic and English writings and translations might be both ways.

This would fulfill a threefold purpose. The Icelandic ethnic group here would have available for their youth the best that it has produced. The people of Iceland would be able to obtain a sort of a composite picture of the thoughts and ideals, the trials and struggles, the success and achievements of Canadians and Americans of their own blood. There would be available to the two nations on this continent, in proper concise form, a record of the inner thoughts,—the very soul, of this small group from that distant island nation. That record, together with the more tangible achievements of individuals would form the basis upon which the claim could be made that the best in our heritage and in our institutions and organizations here should be preserved not only for ourselves but for the two nations of which we are a part.

Dr. P. H. T. Thorlakson sees how vulnerable everything of value in our possession appears to be and how much work has to be done if we are even to hold our own. That is why he advocates that steps be taken which will result in the best cooperation of all our organizations. This he stressed in his address before The Icelandic National League at its annual meeting last June, excerpts from which appear in this issue.

The people of Iceland, now that they are members of the U.N. and the N.A.T.O., with a foreign garrison at Keflavik, are disturbed. The Icelandic group here, as it watches the strug-

gle which its various organizations are staging for their existence, and even as they take pride in their greatest venture, the establishment of a Department of Icelandic in the University of Manitoba, also have reason to be disturbed. The duality which the Iceland-

ic people have voluntarily accepted, externally in the one case and internally in the other, with the resulting inescapable duty to a common heritage calls for serious thinking. It calls for a common perspective.

W. J. Lindal

M A N N A

By HELEN SWINBURNE

Now and then—like blossoms fair unfolding —
 Moments of musing flower into being;
 Moments when dream outshined reality,
 When faith, in hallowed garb, quells hooded fear;
 And sorrow walks on silent feet and bears
 A budding bough with promise of rare blooms;
 When death's deep cave seems lit with lucent light
 Radiant beyond our ken;
 And sweet remembrance breathes into the soul
 Leaving an afterglow of warm content;
 When inspiration flares with sudden fire,
 Then flings her torch upon the mounded dust
 Of destiny, where you, or I
 May gather up the sparks before they vanish
 Into nothingness.

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Marking Wild Geese in Iceland

by PETER SCOTT

The Severn Wildfowl Trust's expedition to the Central Highlands of Iceland has returned after spending six weeks on the breeding grounds of the Pink-footed Geese. Our main object was more successfully achieved than any of us had anticipated, and 1,152 geese were caught, marked, and released, of which many are likely to be recorded in Britain during the coming winter. On June 26, after a four-day journey with a train of 17 ponies, the expedition reached its destination—the marshy oasis of vegetation at the headwaters of the River Thjórsá, bounded on three sides by a desert and on the fourth by the Hofsjökull ice-cap. The ponies returned southward next day, leaving the four members of the party—Dr. Finnur Gudmundsson, of the Reykjavík Natural History Museum, James Fisher, Miss Philippa Talbot-Ponsonby, and myself—camped on the west bank of the great glacier river, at the very edge of a flourishing breeding colony of geese. Most of the goslings had hatched, but a few nests still contained eggs and we were able to watch and to photograph the sitting females from a hide.

For the next fortnight our activities were limited to a day's walking radius from the base camp, but this did not prevent us from reaching on one memorable marathon day the moraine of the glacier, where on the outer ring of mounds, rich in alpine vegetation, a great many of the geese had nested. By counting the hatched nests here and elsewhere (we found 212 altogether.) and measuring the area covered by our walks we were able to estimate that a minimum of 1,700 pairs of Pinkfeet were breeding in the 44 square

miles of what we termed "goose-worthy tundra bog." The nests were nearly always on banks or hillocks commanding a good view of the surrounding tundra, and often they were on traditional sites where the vegetation, fed by manure from generations of breeding geese, had created a mound sometimes more than 2ft. high. The discovery of so many nests seems to establish the Central Highlands of Iceland as probably the largest breeding ground of Pinkfeet in the world. The Colonies in Greenland so far recorded are none of them so extensive and nothing comparable has been discovered in Spitsbergen.

SURE-FOOTED PONIES

During this first phase of the expedition little work could be done on marking the geese. A pinkfoot gosling's leg becomes large enough to carry a ring only when it is about two weeks old. Some of the younger goslings, however, were "tagged" with small aluminium clips attached to the web of skin of the forewing—a technique which has been developed in Sweden. We also used these clips to mark 23 Whooper Swans. On July 10 a second train of ponies reached our base camp with stores and equipment. Seven of these ponies were to remain with us, under the care of an Icelandic farmer, Valentinus Jónsson, for the rest of our stay. These sturdy creatures greatly enlarged our radius of activity. On their backs we were able to cross the 300 yards of swift-flowing Thjórsá—4ft. deep and milky white from the glacial mud, which drifts, in places, into dangerous quicksands. Using two of them as pack ponies we were able

to make temporary camp away from our base on an expedition to Arnafell—the eagle mountain—where, appropriately enough an immature White-tailed Eagle looked down upon us from a ledge far up on the mountain's face.

So sure-footed were our mounts that we took them almost to the summit of 3,000 ft. Olafsfell to look for (and to find) two rare but suitably minute and insignificant-looking Arctic plants, *Cardamine bellidifolia* and *Draba nivialis*. The same day we visited two hot springs, in one of which we found great shoals of Sticklebacks living in water that was warm to the touch (32 deg. C), surrounded by lush vegetation, including adder's-tongue fern, *Ophio-glossum vulgatum*. The other spring was hotter, and here, it being a chill evening, we dabbled our hands in water that was almost too hot for comfort and stood in the steaming stream in our rubber boots to warm our feet. But most important of all, the seven ponies brought a rapid development of the technique for catching geese, and thus the main object of our expedition progressed.

FAST RUNNERS

One might think that a "grounded" wild goose would be easy to catch, but the Pinkfoot has evolved extremely efficient protective behaviour during this vulnerable flightless period. As soon as danger is detected, often at a range of a mile, the group of geese, perhaps 20 strong, perhaps 100, begins to run uphill. With a level start an adult goose runs uphill substantially faster than a man. By using the low rolling hills of which there are many among the marshes it is occasionally possible to surprise the geese a few hundred yards away, and by galloping after them on horseback they can be

overtaken. When closely pursued the flock scatters and many of them crouch. It is then often possible to walk up to and pick up adult geese, although the goslings require a final chase for which improvised hand nets were very useful. By this rather crude method we could catch about 15 birds from each flock (once 28) and on three occasions over 50 in a day.

The technique had its dangers; ponies and men could fall, and it was in pursuit of a well-grown gosling that James Fisher seriously sprained his ankle and was immobilized for a week. Clearly a better method must be evolved. The stake nets, short though they were—less than 200 yards in all—must be set near the summits of some of the hills. We selected a hill called Oddkelsalda, and here the first catch in the nets yielded 15, and the second, a few days later, 10.

We were sure that there must still be a better way for archaeological reasons. On the crests of many of these low grey stony hills (*alda* is the Icelandic word, and it also means a wave) there are small walled pens known to the farmers who come here to collect their sheep in the autumn as "goose-folds." They told us of 10 and we found as many more. They are long-disused and evidently of ancient origin. Perhaps they were built by the inhabitants of the Thjórsá Valley before the first great eruption of Hekla in 1104—by Gaukur Trandilsson of Stöng, a hero of the sagas, before his fine farm was destroyed by volcanic ash. For the next six centuries the interior of Iceland was almost unvisited until in the early 18th century it became a sanctuary for outlaws. Whether a hungry outlaw or the famous Gaukur was architect of these ruined stone pens (the largest was 13 yards by 2½ yards) may never be known, but it is strange

that no tradition of the operating method has been handed down. It is certain, however, that they were not built to catch 10 or 15 geese at a time. We wondered what kind of nets were used to funnel the geese into the traps.

NETS TRAMPLED FLAT

Then we went out to drive the geese to our nets for the third time. We had thought the drive out more carefully and, on our ponies, we converged upon the north crest of Oddkelsalda. Between us we had rounded up such a crowd of geese that our nets were trampled flat. At a gallop we rounded them up again although many had scuttled away too fast for us, and again the nets were knocked down. But about half the geese were still on the crest of the hill and, by surrounding them closely, we held them until the nets could be doubly strengthened. Then we drove in and caught 267 geese. The catch included two carrying blue-dyed aluminium rings, birds which we had caught in Scotland in rocket nets during last winter—a special thrill.

Almost by accident we had discovered how to use the strong flock instinct of the geese which keeps them together and stationary at the top of a hill. We had solved not only the problem of how to catch Pinkfeet for ringing, but also the mystery of the ancient goose folds. Thereafter we made four more big catches, although the first remained the largest. In each there were recaptures of birds already marked in previous catches and the proportion gave some indication of the total population in the area. In spite of many sources of possible error, it seems that there may, in the whole oasis, have been more than 15,000 geese, counting adults and goslings together.

A THOUSAND RINGED

When the last day came we had still 50 geese to catch to make a thousand and exhaust the rings we had brought with us. It was a day we had set aside for packing, but the lure of round figures was irresistible. Less than two miles from camp we found a marsh full of geese and in a few seconds we had deployed at the gallop. Each now knew his part so well that we soon had a tight bunch of geese on the top of the wave. There we held them while the net was set, and then drove them gently in—202 birds in all. So the thousandth goose was ringed and the rest were tagged with wingclips.

As the last few were being marked the relief party, bringing 11 pack ponies, came into sight. We were back by lunch-time to begin packing up our base camp, where we had lived so comfortably for six weeks overlooking the wide Thjórsá and its black sandbanks, where a flying boat of Icelandic Airways had so accurately dropped mail and films (and *paté de foie gras*) at half-time, where we had wound the handle of our radio transmitter so vigorously each night in somewhat intermittent communication with Gúfunes radio station, where through the Arctic summer, we had so often watched the midnight glory which is both sunset and sunrise, over the blue ice-cap. Next day no sign of the camp remained except a small cairn of stones on the tundra in which nestled a bottle with the details of our stay and some verses of doggerel. Then we left sadly, a cavalcade of 18 ponies, and as sadly returned three days later on August 4 to the outside world of razors, Korea, and the Test match.

Next month the geese will follow us south for the winter carrying their numbered rings and tags, with the ad-

dress to which notification should be sent if they are recovered: "Mus. Nat. Reykjavik, Iceland". So, in due course, we shall learn yet more about the romantic Pinkfeet—the wild grey geese of England and Scotland.

The Severn Wildfowl Trust's expedition was in Iceland during the summer of 1951, and this article was published in The Times (London, Eng.), August 25, 1951. Mr. H. V. Larusson, a member of our Club, who met Mr. Scott in Iceland that summer, secured his permission for reprinting it in the Icelandic Canadian, and also was granted permission by The Times. We acknowledge with thanks this courtesy. —Editor.

Rev. Brynjólfsson to Serve in Vancouver

Rev. Eiríkur Brynjólfsson arrived in Winnipeg from Iceland in August with his wife and three children and went shortly thereafter to Vancouver where he has been engaged to serve the Icelandic Lutheran congregation.

Rev. Brynjólfsson, who was previously pastor at Útskálum, in Iceland served at the First Lutheran church, Winnipeg, as exchange pastor in 1947-48 during the time that Rev. V. J. Eylands took his pastorate in Iceland.

DR. and MRS. LÖVE ATTEND INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

Around the middle of Aug. Dr. and Mrs. Áskell Löve, with their two small daughters, drove to Pennsylvania, where they had been invited by the International Grassland Congress, held at the State College, to give a joint paper on Geo-Botanical Significance of Polyploidy.

Over 2,000 persons attended the Congress with Grassland Scientists from all over the world gathered together to hear the lectures and participate in the discussions. The Congress lasted for a week and Dr. and Mrs. Löve were among the hundred eminent scientists from countries other than the U.S.A., who were invited to lecture there.

Pennsylvania State College is one of the largest in the U.S., with 16,000 students and with special facilities for Grass breeding where the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture N. Eastern Grassland Research Station is situated.

During their stay at the Congress the delegates were in residence at the College and Dr. and Mrs. Löve had

the opportunity of renewing acquaintance with noted scientists from many nations, for they have travelled extensively in connection with their work, in England, Norway, Finland and in other countries.

There were full facilities at the Congress for entertaining the children who accompanied their scientist parents, with sight-seeing trips and participation in various organized activities.

On their way east Dr. and Mrs. Löve visited Dr. Löve's brother, Dr. Jón Löve Karlsson, who lives in Cleveland and is Ass't Professor in the Dpt. of Microbiology at Western Reserve University where he does special research in tuberculosis bacteria. Jón is a Ph. D. (California, 1947) in Bacteriology, and M.D. (U. of Calif. 1952), where he won a special award of \$500 for his bacteriological research.

Dr. Áskell Löve is Associate Professor of botany at the University of Manitoba (see Icel. Can. Summer '51). He is a member of the editorial board of the Icelandic Canadian. Mrs. Löve is curator of the Herbarium at the U. of Manitoba.

The Challenge of the Future

by DR. P. H. T. THORLAKSON

The following are excerpts from the address given by Dr. Thorlakson at the annual meeting of the Icelandic National League last June. The intrinsic value of the Icelandic language and literature as a cultural asset for the individual and for our country, so ably pointed up by Dr. Thorlakson, is the very cornerstone on which the Icelandic Canadian Magazine stands, and on which our endeavours and aspirations are built. These values and the proper approach to the effort of preserving our cultural heritage here have been continuously emphasized, in organizing and conducting the Icelandic Canadian Evening School, and other Icelandic language classes and study groups. It is a great pleasure to present to our readers, Dr. Thorlakson's views, and his analysis of the problems facing us in this work. He makes a suggestion as to how the sphere of the activities in this field may be broadened by a closer co-operation between the various organizations among the Icelanders here, who are striving towards the same cultural ends. —Editor.

... What of the future? In what way can we broaden our activities and interests so as to include a large number of the Icelandic people? What of the ever-increasing number of people who are only partly Icelandic? Is the multiplicity of organizations amongst the Icelandic group an advantage or a detriment. Has the time come to realign our associations so that greater cohesion and more effective prosecution of our aims and objectives will become possible? Are the publications of the Icelandic papers to remain the responsibility of a few or the obligation of the group as a whole? What new approach is indicated by the inauguration of a Department of Icelandic Language and Literature at the University of Manitoba with a full-time professor in charge? In what way can we assist in the full development of this Department and provide continued community support and interest? Are we so constituted that our

organization can keep apace with new circumstances and the ever-changing affiliation of our people within the community?

The record, I believe, shows that the Icelandic people are able to adjust themselves and meet this challenge in a way that should give promise for the future. . . .

In every successful society among men, there must be a common interest and a bond of real fellowship. These are the cementing influences. In most organizations, there are also some disrupting influences which serve to thwart and postpone and even defeat the most enthusiastic and loyal workers. Let us examine the latter influences which cause a gradual but steady fragmentation of our national group. The important ones are natural and inevitable and in some cases are, in themselves, a credit to the Icelandic people. Some of these factors are simply an expression of the natural adaptability of the Icelandic people themselves and an evidence of good citizenship and individual initiative finding new outlets in a new country. Many of the changes that contribute most to our difficulties in maintaining common bonds of interests are the very things of which we have good reason to be most proud.

Let us list the most obvious reasons:

1. NUMBERS— ours is a small group, probably the smallest single national group in Canada and the United States of America. Apart from three or four exceptions, our people have scattered to every city, state and province of this great American continent.

2. **OCCUPATION**— it is normal and natural that one's fellow employees and professional colleagues no matter what their national origin, should occupy a substantial portion of one's time and thoughts and interest. Our close business and professional associates are not always Icelandic.

3. **GEOGRAPHY**— from the point of view of our group, distance is a dis-integrating factor. This arises not only because of the continental immensity but also because within cities and communities in which we live, distance is a cause of separation. By and large, except in some areas, our neighbors are not Icelandic.

4. **MARRIAGE**— in some districts, over 80% of the marriages performed by Icelandic clergymen are "mixed" marriages. Either the Bride or the Groom is not Icelandic. This is not a new situation for this practice goes back to ancient times and seems almost to be a Viking tradition. Did not one of our forebears take with him to Iceland the beautiful and charming Irish princess by the name of Melkorka. Some of us seem to have inherited this weakness for the Irish ladies down to the present time. . . .

The inherent difficulties in the situation and the many conflicting influences are only too apparent but must be taken in account by any group that wishes to maintain an active interest in Icelandic matters. The group, if it wishes to survive, must adjust itself to these changing conditions and take stock of its own limitations. . . .

There are those who say that nothing can be done, that nothing should be done and that any attempt to stem the tide is just so much waste effort. They contend that it is contrary to the best interest of our children to hamper their complete fusion, with loss of

identity, into the American or Canadian way of life. The difficulties assume abnormal proportions and they advise that we capitulate and give up the struggle. To them, it seems useless to attempt to stimulate or re-awaken an interest in Icelandic history and Icelandic scholarship.

These are the counsels of those who would have us forget or neglect much that has been in our making for a thousand years.

What is the answer to these counsels of defeatism? It is not within my competence to provide a complete answer. It is sometimes difficult to express exactly how one feels about a matter which has so many ramifications. We may have difficulty in finding the correct answers. We must look for leads. It is our duty to search diligently for leads, build up the answers and then take common and concerted action. . . .

Lord Tweedsmuir, on the occasion of his visit to Gimli in September 1936, gave utterance to an observation which should burn itself deeply into our consciousness. ". . . You have become in the fullest sense good Canadians, and have shared in all the enterprises and struggles of this new nation, and at the same time I rejoice to think that you have never forgotten the traditions of your homeland. That is the way in which a strong people is made—by accepting willingly the duties and loyalties of your adopted country, but also by bringing your own native traditions as a contribution to the making of Canada."

"Sixty years ago Lord Dufferin remarked on the devotion which you retained for your Icelandic culture. It is a very great culture, and it contains some of the noblest literature ever produced by mortal men. Far up in that lonely Iceland, girt by stormy

seas, you developed a mode of life which, for simple hardihood and manly independence, has not often been paralleled in history. And you have produced great literature. For myself I put the Icelandic Sagas among the chief works of the human genius."

"There are two elements in your tradition, as reflected in the Sagas, on which I should like to say one word, for I hope that their spirit will never be forgotten. . . . Everywhere in the Sagas you find that insisted upon. The old Icelanders were not only great warriors and adventurers, but they were acute lawyers and mighty jurists. Now, in these modern days, when in so many parts of the world there is a danger of the breakdown of law, that spirit seems to me to be of the highest value. . . ."

"The second element in the Saga tradition is still greater. As I see it, it is the belief that truth and righteousness must be followed for their own sake, quite independent of any material rewards. Consider what was the old Icelandic creed. . . . It was better to fall with Odin than to survive with the powers of evil.

"That is the only true and manly morality. . . . It was the creed of your forefathers. It is the creed of Christianity. It is the only creed which can put salt and iron and vigour into human life."

The British people do not forget their past. Was it not Winston Churchill who said that "the further we can look back, the more confidently can we look towards the future"?

Last year the University of Edinburgh appointed a special instructor in Icelandic Language and Literature. The universities of Oxford, Leeds, Manchester, Hull, Aberystwyth and others have had facilities for Icelandic studies for many years.

Are Canadians or Americans of Icelandic descent to ignore the past and forget the main-spring of their origin and their very existence?

The path that lies ahead of us is clear—contributing our best to the building of a new nation, performance of duties as citizens of this country, mastery of the 'mother tongue' in this land, that is English. An acquaintance, if not versatility, with the other official language of our country—French. But may we not, every once in a while, pause and look back. And as we do so and observe the receding picture, is there nothing that we are losing? First, there is the language. Many people in this country have a tendency to be completely satisfied with their ability to speak but one language. An effective way to become educated with a broad outlook and a sympathetic and tolerant approach in our thinking is to acquire and cultivate deliberately and assiduously a knowledge of other people and the languages in which they have given expression to their thoughts and feelings.

A speaking familiarity with at least two languages, be they English, French, Ukrainian, German, Russian, Spanish or Icelandic, should be a minimum linguistic achievement of an educated person.

Officially, this country is bilingual and will likely continue to be so for the rest of time. Switzerland has 3 or 4 official languages and is one of the most progressive and successful countries in the world. We are apt to think of this multiplicity of languages as a national handicap and so it is. But that is because we emphasize the wrong aspects of the problem. The way most Canadians look upon the problem is that it hampers free business and social intercourse. The cultural values are overlooked. Every

French-Canadian should learn to speak one other language. He will naturally choose English. Every other Canadian should be encouraged to read and speak another language. The large majority would choose French. However, some other living language would do. It would give him a stamp of broader culture. The study and knowledge of another language does not detract from one's ability to express one's self in English. The truth of the matter is that it should enhance one's ability to write and converse in our common English language. We often think of our great neighbor to the South who is said to be "blessed" with only one official language. We should distinguish between real blessings and mere conveniences. It is our job to find a real solution to our problem of bilingualism, not to ignore it or increase the rift by failing to find a practical solution to the problem.

By way of a mild criticism, I think harm is done by placing the study of another language, be it Icelandic, French or any other language, on an emotional or patriotic basis. The Icelandic language, for its own sake and on its own merit as a classic basic language, opens up new and unexplored regions in the realm of fine literature. To speak and read Icelandic is an intellectual achievement. It is a challenge to master a new vehicle and with it explore new fields for one's personal enjoyment rather than a patriotic duty and the mark of a "good Icelander". I merely suggest a slight change in emphasis and a new approach to the problem of interesting young people to take up another study in their already over-crowded curriculum. . . .

One more thought that might be examined at this time: Should the various activities that are of interest

to the people of the Icelandic communities be brought into one central organization? Is it practical to arrange a meeting of representative groups to discuss closer co-operation in planning those activities which are of general interest? Without necessarily sacrificing the identity of the individual groups, a co-operative effort could result in more effective prosecution of our aims and objectives. The central co-ordinating agency could be known as the Icelandic Society of North America.

Such a new organization, with broad objectives, might help to establish closer and more effective bonds of friendship between the younger people of Iceland and their cousins on this side of the Atlantic. One example of many that could be developed might be mentioned: I am sure that the project of re-forestation of Iceland would be an intriguing problem to some of our young trained scientists. There is a great deal to be learned and much good, both direct and indirect, could come out of such mutual interests as might be developed.

There is a broader aspect to the problem which deserves consideration at this time. A new conception of international assistance is gradually unfolding itself before our very eyes. The nations bordering the Atlantic ocean have combined to form an effective alliance for their mutual protection against aggression. While primarily a defensive alliance, it is expected that other mutual interests will be developed. Of necessity, the economies of the participating countries will gradually become more closely integrated. This, in turn, will result in closer association in other fields of endeavour. Iceland, situated in the very centre of the air-lanes between the two continents, will receive a great deal of notice. As a

result, the history and culture of this relatively small nation will become more generally known throughout the length and breadth of this land. Have we not a share in this new opportunity for creating new contacts between the people of this country and the people of Iceland?

The burden of my message is this: There are many facets in this whole situation which should be examined. The language and literature is the largest and most important single facet—it shines like a star down through the centuries. But do not let this blind us to the fact that there are other important points of interest which must not be ignored. All of us cannot be equally versatile in one field. Can we be contributing to the defeat of our aims and objectives by placing the entire emphasis on one aspect of the problem to the exclusion or detriment of other fields of mutual interest? By placing all the emphasis on the necessity of speaking the language and being familiar with the Icelandic classics, are we simply creating

an exclusive group with limited influence in the total effort? Our job is to seek out latent talents and help to develop them, to re-awaken dormant interests and provide them with information about Iceland and the history of its great literature and its people by whatever medium fills the need. Will such an approach surmount some of the difficulties and lessen the resistance which is only too apparent in some places? I do not know; but I think it is possible. . . .

In view of the ever-changing circumstances of our community life, if we are prepared to re-orient ourselves the future will, I am sure, gradually unfold some of the answers.

Let us be assured that the struggle is worthwhile; that the tools that we are working with are made of enduring materials; that important objectives are always difficult to attain; that success comes to those who have the vision to see ahead, the ability to surmount obstacles and the stamina and courage to persevere even when confronted with an unequal struggle.

AWARDED—Athlone Fellowship



H. Raymond Beck, who was a gold medalist when he graduated in

electrical engineering from the U. of M. in 1947, has been awarded the Athlone Fellowship given by the British Govt., which entitles him to two years post graduate work in Britain.

Mr. Beck was married in August in Toronto, to Miss Alma Harvey, U. of B. C. graduate who did post graduate work in dietetics at the U. of Toronto. They sailed for England Sept. 3. Prior to his departure, Mr. Beck had been in the employ of the Can. Nat. Rly. in Toronto for over three years. He is the son of Mr. J. T. Beck, manager of Columbia Press in Winnipeg, and Mrs. Beck.

Iceland—Problems of a Small Nation, Past and Present

by PROF. GYLFI Þ. GISLASON

This is the second half of a lecture delivered at Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., July 8, 1952, by Prof. Gislason, during his four-month stay in America on the invitation of the American State Department, under its "Cultural Exchange Program."

Gylfi Þ. Gislason has been Professor of Economics at the University of Iceland since about 1940. He is secretary of the Social Democratic Party and was elected to Parliament from Reykjavik constituency in 1946. His father, Þorsteinn Gislason was one of Iceland's distinguished journalists, who was editor of "Óðinn" and "Lögrétta" and a well-known poet. Þorsteinn's brother, Hjalmar Gislason is living in Winnipeg.

Prof. Gislason is married to Guðrún, daughter of Dr. Vilmundur Jónsson, Landlæknir, (Public Health Surgeon, or Chief Public Health Officer), and Mrs. Jónsson. —Ed.

The last World War had far-reaching effects upon the entire economy and position of the country. Iceland was occupied by the British in May of 1940, but a year later the Icelanders made an agreement with the United States which took over the military protection of the country, while the army was to leave the country as soon as the war was over.

During the war the Icelanders supplied the British with important amounts of fish and delivered it to Britain in their own ships, in spite of considerable dangers, thereby losing a considerable number of ships and seamen. Trade was, however, very favorable during the war, and by exports and work on war projects for the British and American armies, Iceland accumulated considerable monetary reserves. The standard of living rose rapidly during the war, but the whole economic system was upset, especially by repercussions of the military works and the stay of the foreign troops in

the country. Inflation ran wild. Socially the disturbances were also great, as can be readily imagined, when scores of thousands of foreign troops were suddenly added to the inhabitants numbering under 140,000. For some time the number of soldiers was about half the total population, making the number of soldiers twice that of adult native males. Would not the presence of 50 to 75 million foreign soldiers in the United States have been a source of worry to the American people? The Icelandic nation thus faced a social and moral problem.

The financial gain by high prices for exports and work for the armies could not compensate for the social disturbance. The material gain was also problematic insofar as it created a standard of living higher than there was any hope of supporting in normal times. After the war, the terms of trade have deteriorated, causing various difficulties, both economic and political. Participation in the Marshal Plan has, however, prevented the standard of living from falling as much as it otherwise would have. Iceland has been granted considerable aid for building electric power plants, fish processing factories and a fertilizer plant.

The United States troops did not leave Iceland immediately at the end of the war. The United States government asked the Icelandic government for the lease of military bases for a long period of time. This was unanimously rejected by all parties in Iceland. A treaty was, however, made in the fall of 1946, concerning the evacuation of the remaining troops and the

use of an airport, which had been constructed at Keflavik. This treaty was the subject of a great debate, and was passed by the Althing against the opposition of several democratic members, in addition to the Communist members. The non-Communist opposition was primarily based on the contention that the sovereignty of Icelanders in their own country was not well enough secured in the treaty.

When the Icelandic government in the spring of 1949 proposed that Iceland join the Atlantic Pact, this was also hotly debated. The Communists opposed it violently. However, there was also opposition within the democratic parties, based on the opinion that there would be sufficient protection in the geographic position of Iceland midway between the United States and the United Kingdom, and the fact that these powers have naval supremacy in this area and would never tolerate domination by others over Iceland. They did not consider the danger of war at that time so great that neighboring states could be endangered by the absence of special defence measures in Iceland. Participation in the Atlantic Pact was supported by an overwhelming majority of the Althing.

Last year the Icelandic government made an agreement with the United States, on behalf of the Atlantic Pact Nations, concerning the defense of Iceland and a small American force was sent to the country, as Iceland has no army of its own and never has had one. The Communists opposed this, as was to be expected, but those members of the democratic parties in the Althing who had opposed the Keflavik airport treaty and participation in the Atlantic Pact, now considered the world situation so critical that it became inevitable to take precautions to

insure that the country in the event of war would perform the same task as it had in the last war, that of protecting the shipping lanes across the Atlantic Ocean.

Making this treaty was considered an inevitable precaution in times of danger, but is not construed as a permanent arrangement in times of peace.

A treaty like this again brings a multitude of social and moral problems to a small nation. It is clear to me that other nations, especially large nations, find it difficult to understand conditions in a dwarf state such as Iceland is. It is hard to comprehend that even a small foreign garrison of, for example 4,000 men, can lead to serious social problems. It is well for Americans to remember that they are a thousand times more numerous than the Icelanders. An army of 4,000 men in Iceland corresponds to 4 million foreign soldiers in the United States. Even if such an army were from a friendly nation, and did all it could not to cause difficulties by its stay, I am certain that American authorities and the American public would soon find this to be a serious problem.

All nations, who have an army, know the social problems caused by military concentrations in or near small communities. The Icelanders number no more than a small town, and for them such problems assume national significance.

The Icelanders, as one of the democratic nations, are of course willing to co-operate in the defense of the Atlantic community. It is clear to responsible Icelanders that, in very critical times, such co-operation may involve the use of military bases in their country. However, it is of the greatest importance, not only for the Icelanders as a nation, but also for the cause of democracy, that this be done with

minimum disturbance to the small Icelandic community, whose position in the family of nations must be regarded as a very special one, on account of the small population.

Developments of the last ten years have turned the eyes of the world more on Iceland than ever before. I have often noticed that foreigners are wondering about the existence of a sovereign nation of 150,000 people in a large, barren country close to the polar circle. Some of them consider it a hopeless adventure. But this adventure has the history of 1100 years behind it.

There has been a great debate about the small nations and their importance. Needless to say, the respect of some of the great powers for the small nations has been minimal, and the understanding of their importance has not been what they themselves would wish. There are people who ask: Why all these small nations? — There are most certainly strong economic and practical advantages to be gained should all of mankind belong to one or very few nations and states. The general standard of living would probably rise, and many problems and disputes of nations would disappear. But we must not forget that together with nations and nation-states, more would disappear than boundaries and nationalism. The variety of these nations would be lost, and so would the enjoyment of life and the national cultures that go with them. Would the world be as lovely if it contained only one species of flower? Is not variety the basis of all beauty?

Whatever one might wish for in this respect, the fact is that mankind is divided into many nations and the world into many states. Bound to this are truly invaluable cultural treasures,

which would be lost if these states or these nations were to disappear.

We Europeans understand that Americans often are amazed by the disunity of Europe. This is not strange, as great as the damage is, caused by the division into many nations and many states. But it must not be forgotten that in spite of everything, Europe is the cradle of the civilization which is the noble heritage of the western world, and in the defense of which the United States now has assumed the leadership. The rich culture of Europe is no doubt partly due to the varied nationalities and the different conditions in the numerous states.

The importance of a small nation for world culture does not depend on its numbers. The history of the Icelanders is notable for this reason, The culture which created the oldest legislative assembly in the world, the Ed-das and the Sagas, would never have existed, if the 60,000 individuals who settled in Iceland in the Saga Age had continued to look upon themselves as Norwegians and Britons. The 150,000 individuals who today consider themselves Icelanders and sacrifice much in order to maintain an independent state and culture, would no doubt be as well or better off materially if they lived in five or six city blocks in New York or London. But their satisfaction from life and that of the next few generations would not be the same, if they lost the bonds with their origin, their past, their history, their language and literature, the many things that they love and count part of themselves. And civilization itself would be poorer and less varied for the loss of them. Is it not of some importance to civilization that there exist an independent nation small as it is, that can read its 1,000-year-old literature better than modern

Englishmen can read Shakespeare's English?

The Icelanders consider it their duty to guard closely their nationality, language and culture, first of all for themselves and their descendants, but also for world civilization. Their history has been a continued metamorphosis — rise and fall, independence and foreign rule, prosperity and poverty. They enjoyed the rich fruits of nature at one time, but also suffered at the hands of cruel elements. All this has helped to mould them. They love their country not with such pride as is often part of the patriotism of large nations, but with sensitivity and sincerity. They know that the 150,000 inhabitants who live in Iceland are few, indeed, but they are understandably proud of the language which has been spoken there for 1100 years, the literature created there, the history which has come to pass there, and the nationality woven out of all this. The Icelanders have no material wealth to protect, no power, nothing but the culture which has moulded their life through the centuries. Their smallness makes it necessary to protect it, even if none purposely intends to harm it. For over 1000 years a lack of communication has isolated the nation and made the protection of its nationality easy. But this isolation is now at an end, making the difficulty facing the Icelanders all the greater.

The Icelanders and their problems today cannot be understood without taking these things into account. And of all foreign nations it is most neces-

sary that this be understood by the Americans who have the closest relations with the Icelanders. For a small nation, a defense agreement with a great power is a serious step, even though it need have no fear of aggression, but is assured of complete courtesy, as is the case in the relations of Iceland and the United States. Continued contacts with large nations is a problem for the Icelanders because of their smallness, and for this very reason a great responsibility rests with the Americans. What is in fact the essence of democracy in international affairs? What is the highest aim of the states who fight for the victory of this ideal? Is it not that the right of the weakest shall be the same as that of the strongest, and the same respect shall be shown the smallest brother as the biggest? Is it not that all nations, also the smallest ones, shall have the best possible condition for developing and protecting their characteristics, strengthening their culture and facilitating their pursuit of happiness?

The relations between Iceland and the United States within the Atlantic Pact can become a model of two democracies showing each other the fullest understanding and consideration. But should this understanding be lacking on one side or the other, these relations might become a moral setback for the democracies and their ideals.

Let us hope that these two nations, the largest and the smallest of the democracies, will have the good fortune to make their relations a model to the world.

Canadian Heads Judicial Group

Lawyers from 42 countries ending a seven-day conference which took place in Berlin, Germany, in August, decided to set up a permanent commission to study and expose injustice behind

the Iron Curtain.

Mr. Justice J. T. Thorson, president of the Canadian Exchequer Court, will be head of the commission, which will have its headquarters at The Hague.

Iceland's "Fjallkona" Visits Flin Flon

By G. Bertha Danielson Johnson



Mrs. Laura Wilson, (Fjallkona), Mrs. Inga Nowazek, and (standing behind her) Mrs. Edna Einarson

The Jubilee Hall, Flin Flon's largest was the scene of colorful pageantry and display at the All Nations' Scholarship Tea, sponsored by the Business and Professional Women's Club in May. Its four walls were tapestried with weaving, embroidery, hand-made laces, crocheting, samplers, paintings, and flags; and the display tables laden with treasures steeped in the proud traditions of more than a dozen nations. Here, for a day, Iceland's "Fjallkona" and two of her compatriots, also in Icelandic dress, reigned in dignity amid the charm of Oriental ladies, and gay-costumed peasants of the Baltic countries.

Having briefly paid our respects to the trio beside Iceland's booth, we are swept along with the hundreds that are now filling the aisles and the tea tables, in a fleeting tour of the other nations, before viewing the Iceland display in more detail.

The central theme consists of two long tables, one decked out in elaborate lace and silver where the tea is poured; the other for the guests where a mountie in full uniform, paddles his canoe on a mirror lake, and a bowl of Flin Flon's own crocuses, as blue and beautiful as any the prairies can boast, brings a breath of spring. On the wall are caribou garments,

mukluks of seal skin, native bead work, a Polar bear rug, and other strictly Northern products; and above the tables colorful Maple Leaves proclaimed it Canada's own.

And now on to Sweden, where we taste the dainty delicacies of the Swedish "Smorgosbord", and look upon the arts of the Swedish homemaker: hand-woven floor coverings; table runners; framed mottoes in the Swedish language; copper kitchenware polished to shine like gold; silverware; and knick-knacks. And the gay yellow and blue flag waving from its golden flag staff.

There Denmark's banner flies over dainty tea tables and a display highlighted by linens edged with their own special hand-made laces; there, too, is the intriguing little lace loom on which they are made. We see royal porcelain, and Danish silver; and here someone who loved the Danish countryside, caught the beauty of their native flowers in the magic of silken threads.

Norway's winter landscape; carving, and candlebra; formal costume, and weaving, writes a finale to the Scandinavian arts and crafts. And now, beneath the red, white and green colors of Hungary is a priceless carpet, and peasant embroidery; beside them the gay embroideries of Slovakia, and the more conservative reds and blacks on the hand-woven tunic of the Ukraine. Here on the table we find a translation of the "History of the Ukraine", by D. Doroshenko; beside it, as if symbolic of the native farms, a dozen Easter eggs, dyed in artistic color and design.

China is next, its ancient art embroidered on rich silks, in the finest of threads, and the most delicate tints. Here is a complete Chinese trousseau, and the table shows the choicest of

china, and vases, jewel-boxes, and figurines. And three lovely ladies grace the Oriental costumes.

A whole wall is set aside for the bake sale, where we find England, Ireland, Scotland, and the other nations offering for sale some traditional culinary art, or arts. Vinarterta was the specialty offered on Iceland's bake sale table.

So we have made the rounds, and had a fleeting glimpse of the whole project, and now we return to the one nearest our hearts.

White, framed in the blue of Iceland's waters, and Iceland's flag is the background for her display. On the wide blue valance, a white name card features "Iceland", in the same blue, below which the flag centres, flanked by smaller flags above the proclamations that "Iceland was the first country to grant women's suffrage." and "The world's first parliament was assembled in Iceland in 930."

Fjallkona, Mrs. Laura Bjarnason Wilson, and her two compatriots, Mrs. Inga Bjornson Nowazek, and Mrs. Edna Einarson, are seated to the left of the long display table; and directly in front, leaving an ample aisle, three tea tables are arranged centred by silk flags. Here two ladies, in white and blue, are serving the waiting guests.

Thanks to our many friends and well wishers we were able to make a very creditable showing. The costume worn by Mrs. Wilson, was loaned by Mrs. Blondal, through the kind cooperation of Mrs. Holmfridur Danielson. Mrs. Henrikson of Selkirk loaned the festival dress worn by Mrs. Nowazek, and the third costume, worn by Mrs. Einarson belonged to Mrs. J. Skulason of Geyser, and was sent to us along with other articles by Mr. and Mrs. Steve Eyolfson of Arborg.

We felt we were most fortunate in having on display a portion of Mrs. Sofia Wathne's collection of weaving. This is a modern adaptation of the old Norse weaving most of it in linen, with a few scarves in wool. This weaving was all designed and adapted by Mrs. Wathne, who has studied the Norse technique since the very beginning of her venture in weaving. They are beautiful masterpieces. Mrs. Wathne also sent a panel of picture plates showing other types of Icelandic crafts, and a woven panel, in the Swedish technique, which is used extensively in Iceland.

Mrs. Wilson of Flin Flon, loaned a part of her collection of hand work. These consisted of beautiful linens, a large banquet cloth, done in Mexican-drawn work; a number of luncheon cloths edged in filet, and ornamented with eyelet and French embroidery. There was a centrepiece in Danish Hedebo embroidery, the origin of which Mrs. Wilson tells us, has a very interesting folk tale attached; and one centrepiece and bolero were done in Battenburg. These and other pieces of Mrs. Wilson's collection have won numerous prizes at exhibitions, and have been on displays at the Handicraft Guild in Winnipeg, and the Women's World's Fair in Chicago in 1926. A framed photo of the display sent to her on that occasion was hung above her work here.

Among the articles sent by Mrs. Hendrikson of Selkirk, were curios, hand carving, pottery, and Icelandic filigree jewellery. And Betel sent the big flag, the dolls in Icelandic costume and a piece of weaving.

There were other interests, too, like the calendar from Iceland, the picture of Winnipeg's Icelandic Float of 1927; a very ancient pair of skates; and wooden chests, probably given to some

loved one generations ago—for there we find a significant date—and treasured through the years, for are we not a sentimental people?

The Iceland display was under the direction of the Canadian Icelandic Ladies Auxiliary, and the able management of our president, Mrs. Helgi Johnson. This organization has been an active group in Flin Flon, since its inception in 1937, with Mrs. G. O. Bergman as its first president. Mrs. Bergman still resides in Flin Flon; if you glance towards the centre of the hall, she is the lady in blue, pouring tea.

In those early days, the home of Dr. and Mrs. P. B. Guttormsson was the regular meeting place, until their departure from this community in 1943. The initial aim was a social one, the men were included, and the group flourished, having at one time over forty members.

Then came the war with its urgent demands. And the ladies, like all others of the land, busied themselves with the needs of this emergency. So there were years of quilting, and knitting, and sewing; with cigarettes sent to Icelandic and other "boys" overseas. Not even an armistice brought idleness. For next came the adoption of an orphan refugee; and later, during the establishment of an Icelandic Old Folk's Home in Vancouver, this worthy enterprise was supported. Now for the last three years, the group has worked almost exclusively for Betel, (the Old Folks' Home at Gimli, Man.), with only small contributions to the Red Cross, Bread for Greece and other such causes.

Our membership is not large; only sixteen. Of these there are seven who were here from the beginning. They still recall with genuine pleasure, the kind hospitality of Dr. and Mrs. Gut-

tormsson, and speak of Miss Dora Peterson, who radiated her warm friendliness to everyone. Copies of the Icelandic song sheet used for the gay sing songs are still to be found in Flin Flon, and the choir of twenty, trained by Mundy Goodmanson, now of Victoria B. C. is still remembered, especially for its rendition of "O Guð Vars Lands", at an All Nations concert in the first little community hall. Folks remember, too, the "Welcome Home" cake at the party held for Dr. Guttormsson, on his return from Arizona, and how happy and thankful they were for his restored health and return.

And now although our numbers are not great, the group is still activated by enthusiastic endeavor, and a close and friendly relationship that makes it a pleasure to be one of them. We all extend our sincerest thanks to all who helped to make our share in this All Nations project worthy of the best Icelandic traditions. Our only regret is that distance made it impossible for you all to be with us to partake of the "rullupilsa and brown bread"; the "kleinur"; the "pönnukökur", and the "vinarterta" served at our Icelandic coffee tables.

o o o

Editor's note— It will come as a surprise to many, to learn that there is an active Icelandic organization in the northern frontier town of Flin Flon, so we asked Bertha Danielson to tell us about their participation in the Folk Festival. Through this we learned of many Icelandic descendants, living in Flin Flon and taking an active part in the cultural life of that very progressive town, whose activities and interests are a far cry from the old frontier-and-mining towns we read about in "Western Stories". Flin Flon is a very progressive city of more than 12,000 where life is made gay and exhilarating with its numerous annual festivities: The Trappers Festival, and The Trout Festival; (of which Bertha has written for the **Northern Sportsman**); The Folk Festival; and the Music Festival, with some 2,500 participants. **James Goodman** is the president of this large and flourishing Music Festival, conducts a male voice choir and does excellent work in helping with the annual operettas of the Flin Flon Glee Club. He is a son of the late Gisli Goodman of Winnipeg, the first conductor of the First Lutheran church choir (around 1907-08). Mrs. Gisli Goodman (James' mother) was Ólöf Halldorsson, a sister of Dr. M. Halldorsson of Winnipeg.

As our readers (especially when they are so scattered and have been out of touch for a long time) like to know about the background of the Icelandic descendants featured in our pages, we endeavoured, with the generous co-operation of Bertha Danielson, to collect some data on the antecedents of the persons mentioned in the above article.

Mrs. Laura Bjarnason Wilson is a daughter of Sigfús Bjarnason from Staffelli at Fellum, Norðurmúlasýsla, Iceland, and his wife, Helga Gunnlaugsdóttir. They came to Nova Scotia in 1879 and pioneered in North Dakota in 1883, moving to Elfros, Sask. in 1906.

Mrs. Inga Björnsson Nowazek is a daughter of Hjörleifur Björnsson from Seiðisfjörður, Iceland (he was a relative of Einar Hjörleifsson Kvaran), and his wife, Elín Jónsdóttir from Westman Islands. **Mrs. Edna Einarson** is the wife of Olafur Einarson, a contractor and commercial fisherman at Flin Flon. Her father, Sigurjon Anderson is a son of Olafur Arnason, from Fljótshlíð in Hlíðarendakoti, Iceland, and his wife Málfríður Jónsdóttir, from Vatnsleysuströnd, in Gullbringusýsla. This family pioneered in the Pingvalla, (Sask.) settlement. Edna's mother Margret was born at Churchbridge, Sask., a daughter of Magnús and Ingigerður Stefánsson.

Mrs. G. O. Bergman is a wife of the manager of the Royal Bank at Flin Flon. She was formerly Georgina (Doadie) Thompson, daughter of Henry Thompson of Winnipeg and Flin Flon. (His parents, Erlendur Thordarson from Eyjafjörður and Björg Erlendsdóttir from Húnavatnssýsla, Iceland, came to Winnipeg in 1883). Mrs. Bergman's mother was Guðný (Jones) Thompson, a daughter of Jónas Brynjólfsson from Hecla (Big Island) Man.

Mrs. Helgi Johnson (Veiga), whose husband is the manager of the North American Lumber Company at Flin Flon, is a daughter of Tryggvi Benediktson Arason (born at Hamri in Laxárdal, Suðurlingeyjarsýsla, Iceland) and his wife Guðlaug Eiríksdóttir Isfeld, born at Fjarðarkoti, Mjóafjörður, Suðurmúlasýsla. **Dr. Pjetur Guttormsson** who practised medicine in Flin Flon for a number of years, and later in Vancouver, now lives in Watrous, Sask. He is a son of Vigfús

The Business and Professional Women's club of Flin Flon, which sponsored the All Nations' scholarship Tea, is very active in the cultural life of the town and the current scholarships were being raised to aid two young women of the town, one of them to study voice culture in Montreal and the other for a university graduate nurse's course in Toronto. Miss Norma Tissot, vice-president of the Flin Flon B. & P. Club, was elected by the Manitoba delegates attending the 13th National Biennial convention of Business and Professional Women's clubs (held in Vancouver), as the provincial president (Manitoba). She thus became a member of the national board and attended its first meeting immediately following the convention, July 19, to formulate the national program and policies for the coming year.

Helgason Lyrics Sung on the Radio

Three brand new songs, the words written by Mrs. Elma P. Helgason of Sexsmith, Alberta, have been heard regularly on the Peace River air waves during the last year.

Two of the songs were set to music by Al Terry of Hollywood, and are called "Springtime" and "When the Simonette is Singing". The third song "Down beside the Wide Pacific", is composed by Elma Helgason herself, copy-righted and published by Cine-Mart Music Publishing of Hollywood. All three songs were recorded by Hollyhit Records of Hollywood, and have also been published in sheet music form.

Mrs. Chris Helgason, who is a daughter of the dauntless Peace River pioneer, Magnus G. Gudlaugson (see Icel. Can. Autumn, '51) was brought up in the Peace River Country, has been a keen observer of the district scene and has set down her impressions in more than a hundred poems, many of which have been published by Canadian papers and magazines. The three new songs mark her first venture into the world of music.

Her poems have been read on the regular program of radio station C.F. G.P. (Grande Prairie), called 'Poets' Gold' and the three songs mentioned are regular features on this program. C.J.P.C. (Dawson Creek) also has her songs for use on its program.

"I started making up verses before I could read or write", says Elma, "and my older sister copied them for me. By the time I could write, myself, I had quite a little booklet of verses, but later it was lost. By the time I was 17, I had several exercise books full of poems. 'The flight of Geese' is from that period, and it was later published

in *Chatelaine*. This was the first poem I sold, although one of them had been published in the *Grande Prairie Herald* when I was fourteen."

Since then her poems have been in various publications in the West, and editors have repeatedly advised her to have them published in book form. But Mrs. Helgason has been and still is a very busy farm woman, with myriad duties engaging her time. "I gave up writing verse while the children were small", she says, "and only started again two years ago."

Even now there is little leisure time for Mrs. Helgason to indulge in her cherished pastime, judging by her daily program of chores. Sexsmith, which has been called "the town with the elevator skyline", and was at one time known as the "Grain Capital of the British Empire", has a population of only 300 or so, and the farms around are not equipped with all modern conveniences.

The Helgasons have had some bad luck with their crops. Last year it was all snowed under, although some of it was saved in the spring; and the year before the crop froze. So the family is working very hard to make up for these misfortunes. There are three children: Fay, 17; Bryan, 15; and Ronald 13.

"The children are wonderfully good and helpful", says Mrs. Helgason, "but they have studies to do and Fay is really overworked, taking half of her grade XII last year as well as writing her grade VIII music exams, and giving music lessons to several pupils". So the parents, naturally have to shoulder the main burden and Mrs. Helgason's day goes something like this:

"I get up between 5 and 6 in the morning, milk 3-5 cows, separate the milk, feed the calves, take care of the utensils, and an eight-room house, get the meals for five or more persons, and try to help Chris in the fields when possible. In addition Fay and I have a class of 15 music pupils between us.

"We have no electric lights, the water has to be carried up a long hill and our stoves burn wood. So even if my husband and the children help all they can, you must wonder when I find the time to write. Most of my writing is done at night after ten o'clock, but sometimes I am too tired and then I feel that my songs and poems are slipping by into the void and lost forever. I would like to write the music for my songs, and have made attempts at this, and would also like to have a book of poems published."

But Mrs. Helgason has proved that she has an unconquerable spirit and it will be transmitted to her children and her children's children, not only through her creative efforts, but in many intangible ways. Her verses show a flowing sense of rhythm, reveal a sensitive kinship with the purpose of

God in nature, and she has command of a good vocabulary for nature descriptions. This is one of her more recent poems:

WILD ROSE

There isn't any flower like the rose,
With heart-shaped petals, and the way
it glows;

Like someone sweet and dear and
loved and true,

It walks its way into the heart of you.
Here are such depths of beauty, and
such grace,

A heavenly glow shines from its lovely
face,

Wee cherub hearts, it's crimson
petals are,

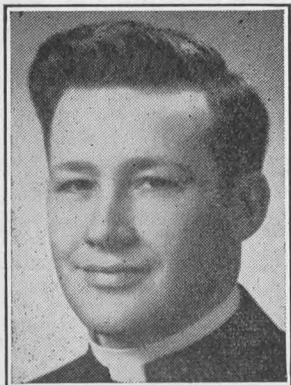
Each yellow centre shining like a star.
How came such beauty from the
lowly sod,

Its radiant petals whisper softly, "God".

The Icelandic Canadian hopes to publish from time to time some of Elma Helgason's verses for the enjoyment of our readers, and we feel sure that a number of them will want to order the records of her three songs mentioned above. They are obtainable from Hollyhit Records, 6715 Hollywood Blvd. Hollywood 28, Calif.

H. D.

Stefan Guttormsson Ordained



Stefan Guttormsson was ordained at the annual convention of the Iceland-

ic Lutheran Synod, held in Minneota in July, as pastor of the Cavalier-Bathgate (N. Dakota) Lutheran Parish.

Rev. Guttormsson is a graduate of St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn. as a B.A. He served for several years in the American Navy and upon his release from service entered the Lutheran Seminary of the North-West Synod in Minneapolis, where he graduated after the three-year course, in the spring of 1952. He is a son of Rev. Guttormur Guttormsson, pastor of the Minneota Parish of the Icelandic Lutheran Synod, and Mrs. Guttormsson.

Musical Programs in Gudlaugson Garage

"Maytime in Alberta", a University of Alberta series of programs which annually tours towns in the province, came to Spirit River (Alta) this spring for the first time. There being no suitable concert hall in the town the programs were held in the spacious and well built garage of Clarence Gudlaugson, Spirit River's recently elected mayor.

The first evening's program and the one most enjoyed by all, was given by the fine University chorus, under the direction of R. S. Eaton. The chorus composed of some 140 university students gave a varied program of classical numbers, folk songs and spirituals to a large, delighted audience.

Gudlaugson's garage has been pronounced to be one of the finest in the province, and speaking of the concert Mr. Eaton remarked that the acoustics in this unusual concert hall, with an improvised stage, were among the best the chorus had found on its tour.

The following evenings other cultural programs were given: a play presented by the Studio Theatre of the U. of A.; a program dealing with libraries and handicrafts; and finally, on Sunday afternoon, a performance of the Air Force Band of the tactical air group in Edmonton. This inter-

nationally famous band gave a flawless performance.

Clarence Gudlaugson, who is the youngest son of M. G. Gudlaugson (see Peace River pioneer, Icel. Can. Autumn, 1951) became the youngest Alberta Mayor when the village of Spirit River proudly became a town recently, but he has for many years played a leading role in municipal affairs, and been an active force in the Community Council which sponsored the "Maytime" series in Spirit River.

Gudlaugson and his employees, with other community workers did a splendid job of preparing the garage for this artistic undertaking and received the plaudits of the whole town and the visiting artists.

Shortly after the "Maytime" series the garage was partly damaged by a fire, but much of it being fire-proof, the show rooms and offices were untouched and in no time at all the genial mayor and garage owner had things in running order and business went on as usual.

Spirit River has a fine Glee Club of its own, which presents Gilbert and Sullivan operettas in the town and tours various other towns in the Peace River district.

D. K. Johnson Wins a Scholarship

Donald Kenneth Johnson won the Dr. Paulson Scholarship of \$100.00 for highest aggregate marks on his graduation from grade XI, at the Lunder School this spring. He also captured the Roger Goulet scholarship. He is a son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Johnson,

Mrs. Johnson (Fjola) being a sister of Wilhelm Kristjanson past president of the Icelandic Canadian Club.

Donald is taking grade XII at the Daniel MacIntyre Collegiate, the family having recently moved to Winnipeg from Lunder.

Thrilling Trip for Air Cadet



WO2 Magnus L. Stefansson

WO2 Magnus Lloyd Stefansson won the honor and distinction of being one of three youthful goodwill ambassadors selected from Manitoba this summer to participate in the Air Cadet exchange visits to Great Britain.

This get-aquainted scheme has been sponsored for the last five years by the Air Cadet League of Canada and the R.C.A.F., and 56 youths were chosen this year to represent Canada in exchange visits to the United States, Great Britain and western Europe. All 18 years of age, the boys were selected on the basis of individual merit, from squadrons across the country, numbering more than 18,000 members.

The 33 members of the Air Cadet Corps of Canada who went to England, arrived in London July 31 by North Star Transport plane and visited R.A.F. and R.C.A.F. stations. After three weeks in England, eight of the boys were accorded the special honor of

continuing on to Norway, Denmark, Sweden and The Netherlands, (two to each of these countries), and it was a big thrill for "Mac" Stefansson, as he is usually called, to be one of the two sent to Norway. The Cadets were royally entertained in Western Europe under the reciprocal arrangement whereby two cadets from each country travelled to Canada in late July.

The two boys flew briefly into Sweden and among other places in Norway they flew to Njarvik, Trömsö, and Trondheim, where the Mayor presented each of them with a picture book illustrating the old world charm and the modern progress of Trondheim and surroundings. This book is published specially to present to visitors and the title page carried the message: "Med hilsen frá Trondheim", as well as the Mayor's signature.

Mac showed us other cherished souvenirs, such as a Diploma and Plaque presented to him by the Norwegian Air Club in Oslo, whose guests they were during their stay in Norway.

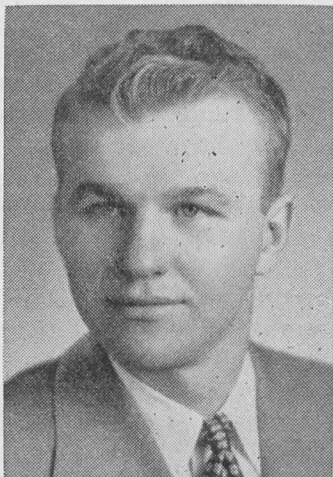
"The barracks of the Royal Norwegian Air Force at Fornebu, which is the air port just outside of Oslo, have luxurious accomodation, Mac tells us. "These and the barracks at Trondheim, now used as a student hostel, were built by the Germans during their occupation of Norway in the last war. Both of them are really the last word in elegance and comfort, the officers quarters being practically luxury-type suites with fine furniture and private bath rooms. When the Germans left hurriedly all this elegance was left intact and is now being enjoyed by the Norwegians.

On the evening of our interview Mac who came back from Europe Aug.

25th, was getting ready to give a talk on his trip, to the Manitoba Council of A.C.L.O.C. so there was no time to hear more details of his thrilling trip. He intends to join the R.C.A.F., having won his wings and a flying scholarship last summer. At the moment, one of his most prized possessions is the little black leather folder containing his private pilot licence from the Dpt. of Transport, and other credentials pertaining thereto.

Mac, who has been training with the Air Cadets for five years, graduated last spring from the Daniel MacIntyre

Collegiate. He is the youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. S. B. Stefannson of 740 Banning St., Winnipeg. His father, Björgvin, teacher at Tuxedo School, No. 1., and Bachelor of Arts, U. of M., 1915, is a son of the late Stefan Björns-son from Litlabakka, N. Múlasýslu, and his wife Guðriður Björnsdóttir, Hannesson. They came from Iceland in 1889 and settled in the Lunda district. Mac's mother is the former Kristín Sigurdson (a first cousin of Jon K. Laxdal), daughter of Hreggviður Sigurdson and his wife Guðrún Torfadóttir. —H. D.



...Dr. Paul Harold Gíslason received his M.D. degree last June, from the University of Maryland, in Baltimore. He is a son of Mrs. Esther M. (Thorgrimson) Gíslason and the late Dr. Gudmund J. Gíslason of Grand Forks, N. D. (and a nephew of Thorsteinn J. Gíslason, well known pioneer of the Brown district, Morden, Man.).

Four years ago Dr. Paul Gíslason was married to Miss Marion Hewitt of Grand Forks. They are at present living in Philadelphia, Penn. (For Dr. Gíslason's war service record, see Ice. Can. Vol 7, No. 1).

WINS GOLF TROPHIES

Miss Ruth Thorvaldson of the St. Charles Country Club, won the coveted Buffalo Trophy in the ladies' finals at Clear Lake in August. The match was against Marlene Wach of the Nakwa Golf Club, and was the finest ladies championship play to be witnessed by the Wasagaming golf enthusiasts.

It was flawless golf all the way, Ruth turning in an approximate medal card of 84 to Marlene's 85. After the match Miss Thorvaldson was presented with the Buffalo Trophy and sundry other prizes by Mr. Justice Thompson at a brief ceremony. This summer she has also won the Tribune Trophy for the City and District golf tournament; the Junior Ladies Championship and finally the St. Charles Country Club Ladies Championship.

Ruth is a daughter of G. S. Thorvaldson, Q.C., and Mrs. Thorvaldson, and a granddaughter of the late Sveinn Thorvaldson, M.B.E., well known pioneer of Riverton, Man. She is a third year student in Arts at the U. of M.

News Letter From Los Angeles

Iceland in "Cavalcade of Culture"

Editors comment — When people of Icelandic descent in Winnipeg are invited to participate in Folk Festivals, and an occasional cultural program is devoted to the Icelanders here, it is taken as a matter of course, for they practically grew up with this city, and helped to build it. But when Iceland is given the honor of being the fourth country to be presented in the important **Cavalcade of Culture**, sponsored by the Hollywood centre for Adult Education, we feel that it is, indeed an important occasion. We take our hats off to the Icelandic descendants in Los Angeles, a relatively small group in a large cosmopolitan and long established city, who have created such a favourable impression among the citizenry, as to make this possible.

In the folder sent to us, "The Cavalcade of Culture" is designated as "an unique series of forum-lectures dramatizing the contributions of various nations, races and peoples to the culture of the United States. "The purpose of the program" announced Carl E. Hendrickson, Principal of Hollywood Adult Evening School, "is to give the residents of Los Angeles definite concrete demonstrations of the fine, worthwhile and significant influences which have affected, and are affecting our speech, art, music, science, food, philosophy, entertainment and general attitude to life.

"This is a new departure in adult education, offering comprehensive proof that the culture of our United States in a collateral admixture of the many peoples comprising our citizenry, all of whom contribute their portion. This series inaugurates a new understanding and genuine appreciation of

the contributions which together comprise the culture of the United States."

It is gratifying to know that educational leaders in Los Angeles feel that the handful of persons of Icelandic descent among the United States' millions of citizens, have contributed substantially to its culture.

It was particularly appropriate that a group representing Spain should open this important series of programs, since California's culture owes a debt to its Spanish background. Therefore, Dr. Jose Perez Del Arco, Consul of Spain, and prominent Spanish artists, opened the unique series on May 28, with a "Night in Spain". The literature, songs, dances and music of Spain was featured.

It was fitting also that the second of the Wednesday-night programs should salute the "Festival of Britain", with Mr. R. H. Hadow, Her Majesty's Consul General, and other members of the British colony taking part.

The third program in the series was devoted to the Philippines, "Crossroads of the Pacific", with a fashion parade of native costumes, the songs and dances and cultural achievements of the Pacific island featured, and with Senor Sofronio Abrera, Consul, and other prominent representatives of the Republic participating.

Then came the important date, Wednesday, June 18, and the program announcement read as follows:

Iceland — "Key to the North"

Descendants of the Vikings
Icelandic literature, songs and music
Native costumes

Larry Thor, star of "Broadway is my Beat"; Stanley T. Olafson, Vice Consul, and others will be on the program.

Mr. Hendrickson opened the program and introduced Mrs. Gudny Thorwaldson, the president of the Icelandic organization, but we will let Mrs. Thorwaldson herself tell our readers about the affair, for she writes such interesting news-letters to the Magazine. . . Following are excerpts from Mrs. Thorwaldson's letter. . .

Larry Thor who was Master of Ceremonies, introduced Mr. Stanley Olafson, Icelandic vice-consul who spoke briefly. Mr. Sumi Swanson gave an historical sketch of Iceland. Soloists were Gudmundur Gudlaugson, Sverrir Runolfson and Dorothy Christopher-son, (Eileen Christie's sister, who also has a lovely voice). Mrs. Sverrir Runolfson was the able accompanist. There was also a male voice quartett, Gunnar Matthiasson, Gudmundur Gudlaugson, Magnus Magnusson. (He is a nephew of the late Eiríkur Magnusson of Cambridge, Eng.) and Carl Erlendson.

A film on Iceland by Hal Linker was shown, and finally the quartet sang "O, Guð vors lands". There was also an exhibit of Icelandic arts and crafts, presided over by Inga Freeberg and Asta Bærings, both dressed in Icelandic costumes.

Our program was considered very good, and Larry Thor, our efficient M.C. showed his ingenuity in promptly remedying a situation that threatened to ruin our program before it started. It was this way,— we found to our consternation, upon arrival at the auditorium, that the two grand pianos belonging there, had been carted off to the Hollywood Bowl for the graduation exercises of the High Schools. The officials of the "Cavalcade of Culture", were nonplussed, and no one seemed to know what to do.

There was an old upright piano in a cafeteria under the auditorium, but

there seemed to be no way of getting it up, as naturally moving firms and other businesses are closed at night. When Larry appeared on the scene, he promptly took command of the situation, assuring Mr. Hendrickson that "we get the moving men from Bekin's at any time day or night over at the studio". So after some hurried phoning the men arrived from Bekin's to move the piano and this saved the situation.

We held our early summer picnic in Centinela Park in Inglewood, with a good attendance, our special guests being a couple from Iceland, Mr. and Mrs. Ari Guðmundsson, who had been visiting in Las Vegas, with Mrs. Guðmundson's uncle, Jon Sigurdson. They also visited her brother Mundi Sveinsson in Los Angeles.

We almost always have visitors from Iceland at our gatherings, and sometimes we try to arrange special get-togethers if they are here on a hurried visit. Such was the case when Mrs. Anna Ásmundsdóttir Torfason came here. She was here only for two weeks or so, and she called me up saying that she would like to meet some of the Icelanders in the city. So I invited her to my home for the Sunday afternoon and managed to get together about forty persons to meet her and have a chat. I would have had more, only so many are on holidays now.

Mrs. Torfason is an amazing person. She is 72 years of age, and travels all over to try to find a market for some of the dainty things women in Iceland can make in their homes, such as these knitted and woven garments. She took a short course in ceramic while here! She is a cousin of Ásmundur Benson in Bottineau, N. Dak., and while here made her home with his daughter Mrs. Coleman, who lives in Pasadena.

We were so fortunate as to have Tani Bjornson, the singer, and his family from Seattle, come to this party and needless to say, he entertained us generously with his singing.

June 30, we had a house-warming for Oddur and Helga Johnson, who had just moved into their new house in a beautiful location at Glendale. Oddur and his son Tom built the house mostly themselves, for he is a carpenter. Mr. and Mrs. Johnson are very popular and well liked and were presented with a fire-place set (Brush, poker, tong, shovel, etc.).

I am so very sorry that I am late in wishing you and the staff of the Ice-

landic Canadian continued success in editing a magazine that so very ably fills the needs of Icelanders in America. . . . The Magazine presents such a rich variety of topics in a very interesting and readable manner. Congratulations.

Yours sincerely,

Gudny M. Thorwaldson

Note: Thank you Mrs. Th. for the good wishes and we wish to take this opportunity of thanking all the others who sent in their congratulations and generous comments after the anniversary issue came out. They are far too numerous to print, but we appreciate themEd.

HON. THOR THORS MINISTER TO SOUTH AMERICA

His Excellency Hon. Thor Thors, Iceland's Minister to Washington and Ottawa, has been appointed Ambassador for Iceland to Brazil and to the Argentine.

In April Mr. Thors, accompanied by Mrs. Thors, flew to Rio de Janeiro to present his credentials to President Vargas, and then continued on to Buenos Aires Argentina, for the same purpose, where he was received by Pres. Juan Peron.

Mr. and Mrs. Thors arrived back in Washington May 20, and early in June Mr. Thors came to Ottawa to present anew his credentials, this time to the new Canadian Governor-General, Vincent Massey, and in the name of our new Queen Elizabeth. He was appointed Minister to Ottawa in January 1948.

Thor Thors is also Iceland's delegate to the United Nations and last winter spent three months in Paris at the meetings of the U.N. General Assembly.

The Icelandic Government has recently bought a spacious house in Wash-

ington with ample room for the Minister's residence and for the offices of the Embassy. The address is: 1906-23rd St., N. W., Washington, D.C.

★

CAN. ENVOY CONGRATULATES NEW PRESIDENT OF ICELAND

W. M. Benedickson, parliamentary assistant to Transport Min. Chevrier flew to Iceland to represent Canada at the inauguration of Iceland's new president, Asgeir Asgeirsson.

At the inauguration ceremonies which took place in Reykjavik, Mr. Benedickson, who represents Kenora-Rainy River constituency, delivered a message of congratulations. The message, signed by acting Prime Minister Fournier, expressed confidence that "Iceland and Canada will jointly make an effective contribution to the cause of peace."

Before leaving Iceland, Mr. Benedickson was decorated by the new president with the Order of the Falcon. Mr. Benedickson was accompanied to Iceland, by his father Christian Benedickson who is now 74 years old and had not seen his native land since he left it at the age of 14.

Book of Poems by David Bjornsson

David Bjornsson's newly published volume of Icelandic poems which he calls "**Rósviðir**" contains some 80 pages of pleasant selections of verse in a variety of metrical forms.

On occasion the poet's ideas find expression in really powerful poetic language. His '**Broddgöngumaðurinn**' (The Trail Blazer), written to Guttormur J. Guttormsson on his seventieth birthday is one of these and is undoubtedly one of the best in the book. Inspired with Bjornsson's sincere admiration of that eminent poet and his work, this poem surges from his pen in crisp concise passages charged with meaning. Here we find no striving for effect; no trite clichés or outworn adjectives sometimes used in poetry (and prose) for over-ornamentation, by those who have little to say and take a long time saying it. It is a poem composed in the best Icelandic tradition, scintillating with classical

allusions, or poetic circumlocution, but always meaningful.

There are some charming verses of lighter texture, such as "**Lóan**" which in a lilting rhythm, sings as gaily as the bird it is saluting (the Icelandic '**Lóa**' is our golden plover). The poem "**Rósviðir**", is a sensitive and sentimental tribute to Bjornsson's wife, while "**Hillingar**" though not so outstanding in form or language, reveals a keen outlook, and contains a challenge.

With paper at the present high price, it always puzzles us why poets and their publishers present their readers with a great deal of blank paper; Bjornsson's volume is no exception in this respect.

Lovers of Icelandic poetry will find much to enjoy and admire in this volume of verse. It is available at Bjornsson's Book Store, 702 Sargent Ave.

H. D.

INSTRUCTION IN ICELANDIC STARTS AT UNIVERSITY

With the opening of the fall term at the University of Manitoba, instruction in the department of Icelandic commences under the direction of Prof. Finnbogi Gudmundsson. Two courses in Icelandic are offered, one for students who enter the University with no Icelandic (IA, 101) and another for those with some knowledge of Icelandic (I, 110).

The text in use will be **Icelandic**, — Grammar Texts-Glossary-, by Stefan Einarsson, 2nd edition, 1949 (The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore), available at the University Bookstore.

Main emphasis will be placed on the language to start with but students will receive also general instruction about the country and its people.

A reading course for those already familiar with the Icelandic language will be given at the University of Manitoba Evening Institute, Broadway Buildings. This will be open to the general public. The course will start late in October.

In connection with the courses in Icelandic Dr. A. H. S. Gillson, President of the University, said: "These courses, in the living language itself, are a core of the work of the Department of Icelandic language and literature. They represent the beginning, within the University, of a program of instruction, research, and cultural activity that we hope will meet the high aspiration of the Icelandic community whose efforts have founded this chair, and create here an important centre of scholarship."

Wins Championship at Royal Winter Fair

At the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto last November, **Margery Johansson** and **Dana Morkeberg**, as a Food Team, carried off top honors by winning the Dominion Championship. (Three Alberta club teams returned home with Championships). They are members of the Tip Top Teeners' Girls' Club of Markerville, Alberta. The competition was open only to provincial winners who had been invited to Toronto for the eventful week of the Fair. Margery who has been associated with the club's work for the past five years, on her return home won a book prize from the Canadian Council for the best essay on her trip. Following is a brief excerpt from her essay.

"Basically one must belong to an active club, have been interested and sympathetic leaders, and be willing to give much time and energy to the development of teamwork. Fortunately for me, my club, the Markerville Tip Top Teeners, gave me the training necessary to achieve the honor of being Alberta's representative to National Club Week. The realization of the importance of this success frightened me but the fact that I had my club members, my leaders, the District Home Economist, and my whole community behind me was most gratifying.

"Thrilling is the only way to describe my impression of the trip from Alberta to Toronto by train. New acquaintances, as we sped on our way, filled every moment with new experiences. As each new group boarded the train I couldn't help thinking: 'I wonder if they are a food team. My, they look hard to beat!' However, singing, games and chatting soon overcame our fears

and we became one big happy group.

"To those who have never been to a city such as Toronto I can assure you one feels as if one were a little child among a large group of adults.

"Monday was the day of our club contests. Naturally there was some good natured rivalry between groups from the various provinces. I can honestly say that my teammate and I were a little afraid. However, the friendliness of the judges soon put us at ease and encouraged us to do our best.

"I spent a most enjoyable afternoon at the Royal Winter Fair. I only wish I could have had more time. There were so many things to see and so little time to see them. I was amazed at the magnificent flower show. Just imagine, one half acre of gorgeous flowers under glass. I would have liked to have stayed here longer, but our guide moved along quickly so that we could see as many exhibits as possible in the short time at our disposal.

"Wednesday was filled to the brim with activity. To meet Foster Hewitt, visit the Happy Gang, and attend the Ice Capades in the Maple Leaf Gardens all in one day is unbelievable. The journey home was a happy one. Although we had to bid goodbye to our new acquaintances, we parted with the feeling that we had greatly benefited by their friendship."

Margery is the daughter of Albert Kristjansson Johansson and his wife Phyllis, who is of English descent. Albert's parents were the late Kristján Jóhannsson and his wife Sigríður Magnúsdóttir, pioneers of the Markerville district. Last year Margery took her grade XII at Innisfail High School.

Honor Graduate in North Dakota



Miss Marvel Adele Kristjanson was graduated as B.Sc. in Education from the University of North Dakota in June 1952. She also received her "Bachelor's Diploma in Teaching."

Marvel took a very active part in University activities, was a member of "Sigma Alpha Iota", an honor society of music students; of "Pi Omega Pi", a national sorority of students in Commerce; and of Pi Lambda Theta, an honor society of students in Education. Marvel has also held office in the two last-named sororities. She is also a member of "Gamma Phi Beta Sorority" and on the executive of the university branch of the Y.M.C.A. and Lutheran Student's Ass'n.

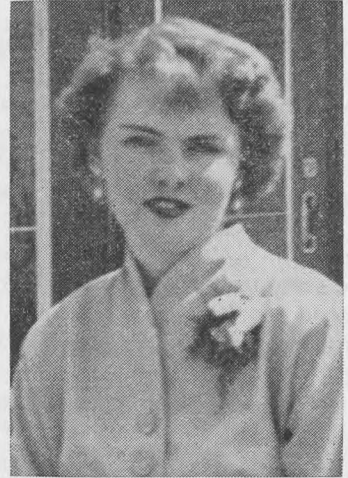
Marvel, a daughter of Kristjan and Valgerður Kristjanson, was born in Buffalo, New York, but came with her parents to Gardar, N. D., where her father has been a successful business man in merchandizing for several years. Kristjan's father was Kristján Halldórson from Bolungarvík, in Ice-

land, and Marvel's mother, Valgerður, is a daughter of Stefán Magnússon Breiðfjörð (who died in 1937) and his wife Kristín Bergman residing at Gardar.

Marvel has been appointed teacher at a high school in Thief River Falls, Minnesota. She is a most charming girl and an excellent pianist always ready and willing to assist in community efforts. She was pianist for the Gardar Children's choir during both summer courses in choral work, dramatics and Icelandic language, conducted by Mrs. H. F. Danielson in 1949 and 1951, and a more efficient and pleasant co-worker could not be wished for.

★

WINS MANITOBA SCHOLARSHIP



Clara Stefanson who finished grade XII at St. James Collegiate, this spring won the Manitoba Scholarship of \$650 a two year scholarship of \$325.00 each year.

Clara is a daughter of Pálmi and Kristin Stefanson, of Steep Rock, Man. Her sister, Florence won the same scholarship in 1945.

IN THE NEWS

EXHIBIT OF FINE WOOL-CRAFTS IN WINNIPEG

Mrs. Anna Toffason, from Reykjavik, Iceland, had an exhibit of exquisite woollen articles in the lower auditorium of the First Lutheran church, late in August.

The large, elegant shoulder scarves (stoles, as we call them here) and small triangular head shawls (fascinators) were all made from native wool, all prepared by hand, combed, spun, dyed and knitted from a two-ply yarn that was spun as fine and even as thread. Some of these were made entirely of undyed wool, shading from the rich coffee-brown of the natural wool in the borders, to a delicate creamy white. Others were in variegated pastel shades, the wool having been dyed with vegetable dyes. Rows of samples of the yarn, wound on cardboard strips, each in its own graded color range, showed on close scrutiny how really painstaking the work of the spinners and dyers had been.

There were also lovely hand-made dresses for little girls, from home-prepared wool, the skirt woven and the bodice knitted, with multi-colored patterns ornamenting the sleeves, neckline, and running in horizontal rows around the bottom of the skirt.

Other articles on exhibit were some pieces of wood carving, including a replica of a spinning wheel, and some filigree jewelry.

Among the large crowd that attended the showing were several members of the Winnipeg Handicraft guild, who expressed their admiration of the exquisitely fine work.

Mrs. Torfason and a number of other women in Iceland have for many years devoted their services to reviving and extending the fine Icelandic

wool-craft. In 1937 Miss Halldóra Bjarnadóttir travelled among the Icelandic settlements in this country showing practical and ornamental home-prepared woollen goods, woven and knitted. Later she was instrumental in having a school established in Eyjafjörður, in the north of Iceland, for the purpose of teaching young women the intricacies of wool-craft as a home industry.

In 1939 Mrs. Torfason and Mrs. Layfey Vilhjálmsdóttir (Prof. Finnbogi Guðmundsson' mother) organized in Reykjavik a project which is called "Íslensk ull" (Icelandic wool), and from this centre they have diligently spread among Icelandic women the interest in this type of work, and given instruction in the fine techniques needed.

Mrs. Torfason has travelled extensively in the Scandinavian countries showing her samples of this home craft. She hopes in this way to create a foreign market for these articles. Her present trip took her to many centres in the United States as well as to Winnipeg and Vancouver.

★

GOODMAN GETS OVERSEAS DUTY

Pvt. Dale Allen Goodman of Milton, N. D., has spent a short time at Camp Kilmer N. J. before leaving for overseas duty in Germany. He has been in the army for two years, and was home this summer on a 20-day furlough to visit his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Grimsi Goodman of Milton, and to attend the wedding of his twin sister, Dorothy Ann, to B. Thomas Rodgers. (The Goodmans were featured in the Icel. Can. "A Country Squire in North Dakota", Spring, 1952).

HONOR STUDENT IN RCAF



High School graduate and former employee of the Bank of Montreal, main branch in Victoria, B. C., **AW2 Johanna Gudrun Stadfeld**, has been named honor student in her class at the R.C.A.F. Radar and Communications School at Clinton, Ont. She was graduated Jan. 23 with a mark of 86 per cent.

Airwoman J. G. Stadfeld is in charge of a group of girls as floor supervisor of the control centre of the R.C.A.F. radar network in eastern Canada. She is one of the most popular girls at the station and well liked by all the girls.

Johanna Gudrun is a daughter of J. H. Stadfeld who had prolonged service with the R.C.A.F. during the last war. He is now with the Civil Service in the Attorney-Generals Dpt. of the B. C. government and lives at 2336 Howard St., Victoria. Her mother is of Scottish-English descent. Her paternal grandparents, pioneers of the Riverton (New Iceland) settlement, were Johann Gudmundson Stadfeld (the Stadfeld surname being adopted when the family came to Canada in 1900), from Stangarholti in Mýrasýsla, Borgarfjörður, Iceland, and his wife,

Ólína Jónsdóttir (who was a trained midwife), from Staðarfelli, Stikkishólmi, in Dalasýsla.

Airwoman Stadfeld's picture and her record in the Airforce have been featured in the Victoria Daily News, on several occasions. She came home for a visit last spring, flew home non-stop from Montreal on the R.C.A.F. Korea Air-lift plane which landed in Seattle Wash.

★

ANNIVERSARY

FEATURED IN "LESBÓK"

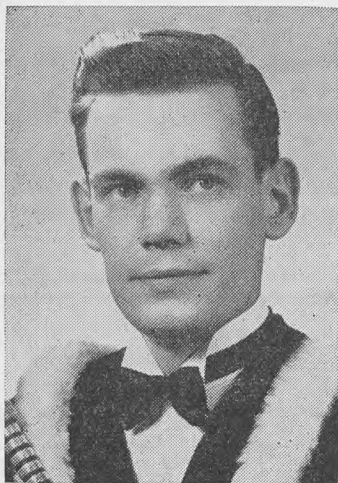
In the Lesbók of August 10, a Sunday supplement of the *Morgunblaðið*, of Reykjavik, Iceland, the editor, Árni Óla featured a very fine three page article to mark the tenth anniversary of the Icelandic Canadian, which he calls: *Íslenzk menning vestan hafs*, with pictures of the editor of the Icel. Can. and the newly elected president of the club.

Mr. Óla, who is considered one of the very finest journalists in Iceland has gone to a great deal of trouble to present ably to his readers what he considers to be an outstanding effort in preserving the Icelandic culture in the West. He has studied the Magazine from the beginning and quotes from the writings of the first editor, Mrs. L. G. Salverson, and summarizes the efforts of the Icel. Can. Club, in the cultural field. The article in its entirety was reprinted by Stefan Einarson, editor of *Heimskringla*, in the issue of September 3.

★

Rev. V. J. Eylands was elected president of the Icelandic Evangelical Lutheran Synod at the annual convention held in Minneota, Minn. in July.

WINNER OF MANY SCHOLARSHIPS



Donald A. Young was graduated from the University of Manitoba in May 1952, with a B.Sc. degree in Civil Engineering.

In addition to scholarships which he has won in previous years, Donald was awarded the following medals and scholarships in his final year: Alumnae Association Jubilee Award, Doupe Gold Medal, University of Manitoba Travelling Fellowship of \$400.00, Kernaghan Bursary of \$300.00, Engineering Institute of Canada Summer Thesis Prize.

He was senior stick of Engineering as well as chairman of the Fort Garry Board of Sticks. Don is entering Harvard University this fall to take a post graduate course in Business Administration. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. N. H. Young, 840 Riverwood Ave., Winnipeg. His mother is the former Nina Myrdal, daughter of Jon and Kristin Myrdal, who lived for many years at Riverton, Man., and now reside in Winnipeg.

BEARSON NAMED LT. GOV- ERNOR OF KIWANIS

John Y. Bearson well known business man of Springville, Utah, was the Kiwanis Club's representative at the 1952 three-day convention of the Utah-Idaho Kiwanis District held at Sun Valley, Idaho. He was accompanied by Mrs. Bearson.

At the convention Mr. Bearson was made Lt. Gov. of the Kiwanis District No. 1. (For further particulars and picture of Mr. Bearson see Icel. Can. Summer '48.)

★

Rev. Johann Friðriksson has been appointed pastor of the Argyle Parish of the Icelandic Lutheran Synod. Rev. V. J. Eylands, president of the Synod presided at the inauguration ceremony which took place at the **Grund** church in the Argyle district, with representatives of all the churches in the Parish present.

Rev. Friðriksson is a son of the late Friðrik Guðmundsson of Mozart, Sask., and his wife Thorgerður. Friðrik Guðmundsson who came to Canada from Norðfjörður, Iceland, was the author of an autobiography in two volumes, written in Icelandic, and called "Endurminningar".

★

WANTED —

Owing to a steady demand for complete sets of The Icelandic Canadian, there is a shortage of several early issues. The Magazine Committee will pay .50 cents per copy, or half a years subscription for each of the following issues:

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Dorothy Mae Jonasson has been awarded a \$250.00 tuition scholarship for further study of the violin at the Toronto Conservatory of Music. The first award was made a year ago and Dorothy has left for her second year of study at the Conservatory.

★ ★ ★

Dawn Darricau, 13 years old, of Kenora, Ont., who recently took her grade two exams in singing at the Toronto Conservatory, won the silver medal for the highest standing in the prov. of Ont. in her grade. Dawn's mother, Thora, is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Eggert Johnson, 939 Ingersoll St., Wpg.

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